

"The Rock of Ages"

= or =

"Ruth's Vision"



A Dramatic Gospel Message

In One Act and Tableau

by

Manford Evans



25c a Copy

MY PERSONAL TESTIMONY

Manford Evans

Tune—"Danny Boy," an Old Irish Melody.

I well recall the day that Jesus saved me
(I long had trod the paths of worldliness);
I well recall the day that Jesus gave me
Salvation through His Blood and Righteousness!
He filled my heart with joy to overflowing;
By Grace He set me free from sin's mad strife,
And now I praise His Name for thus bestowing
On me His wondrous Gift—Eternal Life!

I cannot understand the Love that sought me,
The Love that led my Lord to Calvary;
By Faith alone I see the Blood that bought me—
By Faith alone I know 'twas shed for me!
O, happy day that found me humbly weeping,
A sinner, lost, undone, at Jesus' feet!
O, happy day that found me in His keeping,
A sinner saved by Grace, in Him complete!

Use instead of "Man of Galilee"

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“The Rock of Ages”

OR

“RUTH’S VISION”

A Young People’s Full-Gospel Drama
in

One Act and Tableau

— by —

MANFORD EVANS

Also author of the messages

“MY SHEEP KNOW MY VOICE”

and

“MY MOTHER’S BIBLE”

Price 25c per copy; royalty to author \$1, if produced. Any organization desiring to produce this drama may be advantaged by purchasing 5 copies at 25c each, one for each character, when permission to production will be given without any additional charge. No permission to produce this message will be given unless such production is to glorify God and His Gospel. In no sense is this an entertainment; it is just what its name implies—a Message of the Cross.

INSTRUCTIONS TO DIRECTOR: For cross in tableau, procure two proportionate slabs of wood, the upright to be at least six feet in height. Leave bark on wood for rugged effect. A box, properly draped, is placed at the foot of the cross, tall enough so that a young lady in white robe may kneel upon it and reach up over the cross bar with both hands, in a clinging posture. A little practice will attain the required effect. The lady **MUST** have long hair. Do not spoil tableau with a bob-haired effect. Lights are shut off for scene and a strong spotlight from the back of the auditorium thrown on the cross.

SONGS: The songs used are especially fitted for the drama, and much of the spirit of the message is embodied in their use. This is especially true of “The Man of Galilee” and “The Voice From Calvary.” Other songs may be used in part or whole as deemed best.

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I don't call it a good work to have my vacation spoilt this way. What a fool I was to go to that revival meeting last night! What a fool I was!

MAY—Why? What do you mean, Ruth? Why a fool for going?

RUTH—(Stamping about) I'd like to know who told that evangelist I was there?

MAY—Why, Ruth, I am sure no one told her you were there.

RUTH—(Stamping) They surely did—some one did! Somebody told that girl evangelist I would be there. I know, because she preached right at me throughout her whole sermon. I hate her! I hate her, I tell you. I never slept a wink all last night. I am in misery. What business did she have to come here and spoil my vacation, I'm asking you. (Flings herself on settee) I hate her! I hate her!

ESTHER—(Aside to May) Praise the Lord, Ruth is under conviction!

MAY—Glory to God for answering prayer! (Both girls cross over to Ruth, sitting one on each side) Please, Ruth, do not speak that way about Evangeline. She is a precious child of God.

RUTH—(In disgust) Precious child! Where do you get that precious! I tell you, I hate her!

ESTHER—I do not believe it, Ruth. God by His Spirit is speaking to you dear. He is answering prayer. You are under conviction.

RUTH—(Puzzled) Under conviction? What do you mean?

ESTHER—Don't you remember how mother used to pray for us girls, Ruth?

RUTH—(Trying to appear unconcerned) Possibly! Possibly!

ESTHER—Don't you remember how, just before God called mother home, she made us promise to seek the Lord for salvation, and to live for the Master? Don't you remember, Ruth?

MAY—Surely you remember, Ruth?

RUTH—(As before) Possibly! Possibly!

ESTHER—Please, Ruth, do not act so unconcerned. You remember, do you not, how much we—all of us sisters—loved mother? May and I have given our hearts to the Lord Jesus, and now we are ready to meet mother up there when He shall call us. Besides, the Lord may come any moment, Ruth. The Bible says so. Jesus said, "Be ye also ready. Don't you, too, want to give your heart to the Lord? Won't you, Ruth?"

RUTH—(Fussing) Don't talk that way to me, Esther! I won't

have it! I can't stand it. I wish that girl evangelist had never come. She has ruined my vacation. I despise her!

ESTHER—Please, Ruth, hear me. We love you too much not to be concerned about your salvation. We are praying for you, Ruth.

RUTH—(With emphasis) Don't do it! Don't do it! Pray for someone else. Just let me alone!

MAY—Mother prayed for you, Ruth—

Singing of "I Am Praying for you" by girls off stage. Ruth rises at conclusion of song, plainly touched. Esther and May resume seats).

RUTH—(Sits, putting hands to head as if in pain) This is terrible. I suppose I'll have to content myself with looking up Billy Simpson, the snappy young fellow who won all the fox trotting contests at Helen Moore's dancing academy.

MAY—But Billy doesn't dance now, Sister.

RUTH—(Surprised) Billy doesn't dance? Why does he not?

MAY—He was converted last week.

RUTH—(Astonished) Converted! Converted! What? What?

MAY—Yes, it is true, sister. Billy was converted. Now he is getting ready to go to Bible school.

RUTH—(Show of helplessness) Well, of all things! Worse and worse and worse! Billy Simpson, the best dancer in the county, has quit dancing to go to Bible school! Is it possible? Is it possible?

MAY—Don't you think Billy made a very wise and manly move, Ruth? I do.

RUTH—(In disgust) O, I suppose so! I suppose so!

MAY—But, Ruth—

RUTH—(Gets up, cutting in) Things certainly are shaping up for an awful vacation. O, why did I ever come home? I must get out of here. Think I'll run over and see Helen Moore; she's different.

MAY—But Helen Moore has changed since you were here last, Ruth.

RUTH—(turns abruptly) Changed? Nobody can change Helen Moore. Guess I know Helen. (Sits)

ESTHER—God can change anything, Ruth.

RUTH—(Slumps back helplessly) I—might—have—known it! I—suppose—Helen—More—has—been—converted—too!

ESTHER—Yes, Ruth, Helen Moore has given her heart to the Lord.

RUTH—(As if to herself) Helen Moore—is it possible? Society's brightest gem—how can it be? Helen—rich, refined, cultured Helen—is it possible? Brilliant, benevolent, pleasure-loving Helen—how can it be?

MAY—It is true, sister.

RUTH—What about her dancing studio? Surely she has not abandoned her dancing and art studio.

ESTHER—Yes; she no longer gives dancing lessons. She has turned the fine large hall into a Bible school and prayer room. Helen Moore is now using her money and her talents to help in the work of the Gospel. (Ladies' voice is heard off stage singing gospel song, "Since Jesus Came Into My Heart.") That's Helen now. (Girls get up) Excuse us, won't you, Ruth? (Esther and May Exit R.)

RUTH—(Face in hands) This is terrible! Helen Moore has been converted! Helen Moore! I just can't believe it. (Rises)

HELEN—(Comes down from R., singing, Ruth turns toward her. Grasps the other's hands affectionately) Well, if it isn't Ruth! The Lord bless you, Ruthie. Home from college, eh? Heard you were at the meeting last night, but guess you got away before I could see you. (Both sit)

RUTH—Yes, I'm home from college, but (with show of disgust) I wish I weren't.

HELEN—Why so, Ruth dear? Nice to get back home for a vacation occasionally, is it not?

RUTH—It used to be, but since the whole town's got religion, it's something else. You have been smitten by this revival, too, they tell me.

HELEN—Smitten?

RUTH—Yes. But, really, Helen, how could you fall for all this foolishness—a woman of your attainments? Can it really be true, Helen?

HELEN—I am sorry you put it that way, Ruth. I assure you I have not been smitten by, or fallen for anything wild, foolish or fanatical. I have simply found Jesus. Or, Jesus has found me, rather—picked me out of an empty, useless career and filled me with holy desires—made me a soul winner. Yes, I had attainments; but how did I use them? I had wealth, but to what good purpose did I use it? I had prestige and influence, but how did I use my prestige and influence? With all my refinement, with all my culture, and with all my opportunities, my ideals rose no higher than providing an art and dancing academy for young people. My sense of pleasure was limited to brilliant dancing and bridge parties and other empty social func-

tions. I had no delight in the Lord.

RUTH—But you were happy, were you not?

HELEN—Not at all. I just fancied I was. There is no real happiness, no real joy, no real peace without Christ, Ruth. He alone can satisfy the heart. He only saved me—He keeps me singing the victory every day. In His service I find joys which I never knew existed when I knew not the Lord as my Saviour. Satan beguiles the people, Ruth. He offers them worldly pleasures just to keep them from God. But all these pleasures are like bubbles, Ruth—they look pretty and alluring, and then—and then they burst, and are gone. I was so busy—so busy with myself and my career that I gave God no place in my life.

RUTH—But how did all this happen, Helen? It seems so unreal, so absurd, so unbelievable. Tell me; how did it happen?

HELEN—I'll tell you, Ruth. (Sings "The Man of Galilee." Bursts into tears at conclusion of song) Forgive me, Ruth. No doubt it seems strange to you. But I worship my Saviour, and when I think of how wonderfully He saved me, it makes me so happy I just have to cry for pure joy. Glory to God! It's a wonderful thing to know that you are saved, Ruth—that you have been redeemed, not with corruptible things, such as silver and gold, but by the precious blood of Jesus. I thought I was alright. They all do. Satan deceives the people into believing they don't need old time salvation—a change of heart and a real turning away from sin and to God. I took it all as a joke when they asked me to go to the meeting that night. A woman of my culture and attainments going to a common revival meeting? Absurd! Preposterous! And then—I went. And I thank God for it now! At first it all seemed so silly—such loud praying, such lively singing, such multiplied amens! Then came the sermon. The evangelist was a mere child. Some more absurdities, I thought! I wanted to get up and leave then, but somehow I remained. Perhaps to stay and see how foolish the people really could be! The girl started to preach, right out of the Bible. I can't remember all that followed. I only remember that the little evangelist seemed to have preached but a few minutes when something strange happened. Men and women, boys and girls, from all parts of the room, fairly ran to the altar, calling upon God for mercy. The evangelist was weeping. The air seemed tense. I felt my refinement, my reserve, my culture, my artistic tastes and all my natural pride weighing me down to the deepest hell. For the first time in my life I knew I was a sinner, lost and undone. My past life—useless in the sight of God and angels—rose up before me a veritable mountain, black as midnight.

And then—and then—well, the next thing I knew I was at the altar with the rest of the sinners, calling upon God for mercy. The little child started a song—something about Jesus coming down to die for a poor, lost and worthless sinner like myself. Then I received Him—Jesus—as my personal Saviour. (Sings “The Voice From Calvary.” Ruth, in tears, exit R.) Praise God, Ruth is under conviction. God is dealing with her heart. I must go and pray for the dear child. (Exit L.) (Add impression here by having offstage singing of “Nearer My God to Thee.” Sing one or more stanzas before Ruth re-enters, and continue as she crosses to table where she opens Bible, turning pages. Change singing to “I Need Thee Every Hour.”

EVANGELINE—Enters at R., carrying Bible. Crosses to Ruth, who has turned) Is this Ruth White?

RUTH—The same. (Sits) And you are the girl evangelist?

EVANGELINE—Yes. Were you at the meeting last night?

RUTH—(In disgust) Yes, I was there, just like the fool I was!

EVANGELINE—I don't understand. Don't you like to go to revival meetings?

RUTH—(Gets up, and with show of temper) Indeed, I do not. I hate revivals! I hate evangelists! I hate preachers! I hate those songs! I hate YOU! I hate the whole shameful situation. It's intolerable! It's terrible! It's unbearable! I am in misery! (Sits, wringing her hands) What shall I do? What shall I do? (Covers face with hands.)

EVANGELINE—(Sits beside her) Dear child, you are under conviction.

RUTH—(straightens up) Under conviction! Under conviction! I have heard that before. Don't talk to me!

EVANGELINE—I must talk to you, Ruth. I love you. And Jesus loves you, and it's about Jesus I want to talk to you. I am a child, but with the help of God's own Word, won't you let me lead you to Him?

(Sing off stage first verse and last chorus of “Only Trust the Lord to Save You.”)

RUTH—I don't understand, but go on.

EVANGELINE—You haven't given your heart to Jesus, have you, dear?

RUTH—I—I—guess not. I don't think so.

EVANGELINE—You are not saved, are you, Ruth?

RUTH—Saved? I am not a bad girl.

EVANGELINE—You don't love Jesus, do you?

RUTH—I—I—guess I don't. I don't even know Him!

EVANGELINE—Don't you want to know Him? He wants to blot out your sins and make you happy in His service.

RUTH—But I am not a bad girl.

EVANGELINE—You don't understand me, Ruth. I was not a bad girl either before I was saved. But I was a lost sinner until I fully surrendered my heart and life to Christ. I didn't know Him, nor did I love Him until I came to Him as one who needed His saving grace. Now I know I am saved. I know His love is real. I know that serving Him is real. I was just a worldling like you are. I seemed to love everything but the Lord. But now I love Him above everything else on earth.

RUTH—What you and Helen Moore have told me sounds quite plausible, but I just can't believe. (With face in hands) I just can't believe! I can't believe!

EVANGELINE—But God will give you faith to believe in Him, if you will but ask Him. Ask Jesus to help you, Ruth.

(Sing offstage, "Ask the Saviour to Help You" and "Tell it to Jesus.")

RUTH—But I hate to admit that I am just a common sinner.

EVANGELINE—But you have confessed that you do not know nor love Jesus, Ruth. You realize that you are not saved, do you not?

RUTH—I—I guess so. I feel lost. I know I am not saved. I know I do not love Jesus.

EVANGELINE—(Opens Bible) Now listen to God's Word, Ruth. (Reads) All we (looks up) that takes us all in, you see—like sheep have gone astray, we have turned everyone to his own way.

RUTH—But—but—does that apply to me?

EVANGELINE—Surely. You have turned to your own way, have you not? You never have turned to the Lord Jesus, have you?

RUTH—No—I—I guess I haven't.

EVANGELINE—Hear what the Word says, Ruth. (Reads) For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

RUTH—But can't I be a good moral girl—well educated, cultured, and all that—and still be saved?

EVANGELINE—Not according to the Word of God, dear. Nicodemus was a good man, and one of the most learned rabbis of his time, but he came to Jesus by night and wanted to know the way of eternal life. Jesus didn't say he was alright and that he should go on home. He said "Ye must be born again." Listen to the Word of God, Ruth. (reads) By grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.

RUTH—I—I am beginning to see. Please read some more.

EVANGELINE—(Reads) While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (To Ruth) Do you see?

RUTH—I believe I do. Read on.

EVANGELINE—(Reads) The Lord hath laid on Him (on Jesus) the iniquity of us all. (To Ruth) That takes in you and I, does it not, Ruth?

RUTH—Yes.

EVANGELINE—(Reads) For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (To Ruth) Is that plain to you, Ruth?

RUTH—Yes. (Sing off stage "I Believe Jesus Saves.")

EVANGELINE—(Reads) But as many as receive Him (To Ruth) you have not yet received Him, Ruth—to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. (To Ruth) We have got to receive Him by yielding to Him, you see.

RUTH—Yes, I see, partly. But what shall I do to be saved? What must I do?

EVANGELINE—Nothing. You can't do anything to save yourself. It is Jesus who saves, when you want to be saved badly enough to come to Him in real repentance.

RUTH—I do repent. I know I am a sinner. I know I am lost without Jesus. Now what?

EVANGELINE—Do just what the Apostle Paul said for the Philipian jailor to do.

RUTH—What?

EVANGELINE—He said: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

RUTH—But how shall I get faith TO believe?

EVANGELINE—Confess to Him. Tell Him you know you are a sinner and lost without His saving grace. Then He will cause faith for salvation to spring up in your heart. It's the only way. Confess to God, and ask Him to save you for Jesus' sake. Hear what the Word says: (Reads) If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (To Ruth) See how simple the way of salvation is, Ruth?

RUTH—I—I believe I see it now.

EVANGELINE—Then, won't you let me persuade you to turn

from your worldly life and give your heart to Jesus? Can't I persuade you, Ruth? (Sing off stage, "Almost Persuaded.")

RUTH—(As if in doubt) I—I don't know. I—

EVANGELINE—Come, Ruth. Cast yourself at the Saviour's feet. The Old Rugged Cross still towers over the wrecks of time. Come, Ruth. The Bible says, "A little child shall lead them." I want to lead you to Jesus, Ruth.

(Sing off stage last chorus of "Only Trust the Lord to Save you." Solo voice.)

RUTH—Breaks down, throwing herself on couch) Lord Jesus, help me!

EVANGELINE—Rises, and placing hand on the other's head, speaks reverently, with eyes uplifted). Dear Jesus, save this child for thine own name's sake. (Exit R.)

RUTH—Rises, pressing hand to head, and tearfully, as she looks upward) Dear Lord Jesus, I am so vile. I am not worthy that you should hear me. I am just a poor lost and undone sinner, bound for hell unless you save me. Is there no hope for one such as I—one who has turned always to my own way, and never to thee. (Turns to Bible, which she opens) Dear Jesus, is there not something in Your Book for me? My God, if there is show it to me. (Reads from Bible) "Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." (Presses Bible to her heart, stands looking upward. Sing off stage "Him that Cometh Unto Me." Remain in this position while song is sung.) Lord, I bring nothing but my worthless self. Jesus, Jesus, take me as I am. (Sing off stage "Take Me as I am.") Ruth falls unconscious into couch. Continue singing for a while for effect.)

TABLEAU

THE ROCK OF AGES

(Use "Rock of Ages" first, closing with "The Old Rugged Cross." Do not hurry through. Sing entire songs. As curtain is drawn over tableau, all the ladies re-enter, all kneeling near Ruth.

ESTHER—Ruth, dear, what has happened?

RUTH—(Sits up, puzzled) Wha—What—where am I?

HELEN—Right here with your friends, Ruthie.

RUTH—(Rises) O, now I know. It was so wonderful—so wonderful!

ALL THE GIRLS—What was so wonderful?

RUTH—That vision! I was standing here in prayer when all at once the room became brighter than day—a dazzling light, and—and—

THE GIRLS—Yes—and then what?

RUTH—And—and then I saw Jesus! I saw Jesus! And, O, how I love Him! (Sing off stage, "O, How I Love Jesus.")

THE GIRLS—Praise God!

RUTH—He stretched out His hands toward me; and—and I saw the prints of the nails in them—the nails that held Him to the Old Rugged Cross—on which He shed His blood for a sinner like me. O, to think that He was nailed to the Cross for even me! (Sing off stage first stanza and chorus of "He Was Nailed to the Cross for Me.")

HELEN—He's a wonderful Saviour, is He not, Ruth?

RUTH—Yes—and I do praise Him. It was so wonderful to hear Him say that my sins were blotted out. (Sing "My Sins Are Blotted Out, I know.") I am so glad Jesus has come into my heart. (To Evangeline) I don't hate you now—I love you. (Embraces her. To Helen) Helen, dear, you are the smartest girl in town, after all. God bless you. (They embrace)

HELEN—The Lord bless you, Ruth. I am so glad to know that Jesus has become real to you. Not only does He save; he also keeps in perfect peace those whose minds are staid on Him.

RUTH—And—girls—I saw the most wonderful vision of the Rock of Ages—the Old Rugged Cross. And, O, how I found myself clinging to that blessed Cross. And when I did, Jesus lifted me up—lifted my feet out of the miry clay and placed them on the Solid Rock. He told me to be a witness for Him—to help spread the Gospel message—for so many have become cold, careless and indifferent. He told me that he is coming soon for those who are faithful to Him and His Gospel. He showed me in His Word how we are to pray, to watch and be ready to meet Him. He wants all of his true followers to be at work winning souls for His Kingdom, for the time is short, and what is to be done must be done quickly. He wants the people to fully surrender their hearts and talents to Him. He wants them to live holy and righteously in this present world. He wants the churches to be revived and always on fire with the Message of the Cross. He wants us to keep the revival spirit burning brightly. He wants a true and tried people—tried as by fire. He wants a people who are willing to be misunderstood, and willing to go through with Him at any cost. He wants overcomers.

(Sing first stanza and chorus of "Your Redemption Draweth Nigh." Solo by Helen Moore, other girls joining chorus.

Close with "He's Coming Soon." (The Hawaiian melody.) (Uplifted hands.)

CURTAIN

YOUR REDEMPTION DRAWETH NIGH

By Manford Evans

Melody: "Silver Threads Among the Gold."

Saints of God, look up on high,
Your redemption draweth nigh!
Signs declare it everywhere;
Waiting church, prepare! prepare!
Jesus soon will come, will come again;
Back to earth He'll come to reign;
Soon, yes soon, He'll come again—
Soon upon the earth to reign!

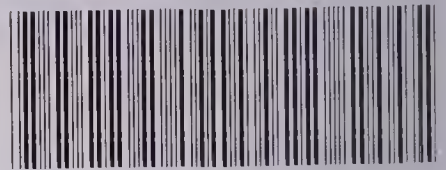
Refrain—

Hallelujah to our coming King!
Praises to His name we bring!
Soon He'll come to claim His own—
Soon, yes, soon, to claim His own!

Soldiers of the cross, be true;
Stand your ground, ye faithful few!
Point the lost to Calvary.
Where one died to make them free.
He who died now lives forever more;
And His coming's at the door;
Day of Grace will soon be o'er—
For His coming's at the door!

Blood-washed army of the Lord,
Anchored to His Holy Word,
Do not falter 'neath the Cross!
Count all earthly gain but dross.
That which He hath given, hold thou fast!
There's a crown for you at last!
Waiting church, the Cross hold fast—
There's a crown for you at last!

Use first stanza and chorus



THE VOICE FROM CALVARY

By Manford Evans

Melody—"Where the Silv'ry Colorado Wends its Way."

Tonight your heart is aching for a peace the world can't give;
In your soul there is a cry that won't be hushed—
And in vain you seek for gladness in the pleasures that you live,
But like broken flowers they fade and turn to dust.
Earthly joys like dreams are fickle—
Shifting shadows on the way—
Trancient peace that passeth as the tide;
But it is not so with Jesus, with the Christ of Calvary—
Jesus gives you peace and joy that will abide.

Refrain—

There's a voice from Calvary,
Pleading gently, "Come to Me,
Ye who labor and can find no peace, no rest;
You my peace I'll gladly give,
Just believe and thou shalt live—
I will wash away your sins and hold you fast."

I love to tell the story of the Christ who came to save—
How He healed the lame and made the blind to see—
How He touched and cleansed the leper, and brot life from out the
grave—
How He spoke the Word and set the captives free.
Then I love to know that Jesus—
This same Jesus as of yore—
Still doth save and heal from every care;
Yesterday, today, forever—Christ the same forever more—
He will lift the load you find you cannot bear!

Use first stanza and chorus
